

## UPPER DELAWARE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 8, 2015

(Annual Meeting)

The Upper Delaware Council held its monthly (annual) meeting on Thursday, January 8, 2015 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Andy Boyar called the meeting to order at 7:01p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and roll call followed.

Boyar introduced and welcomed Westfall Township's alternate Michael Barth.

In attendance: Town of Hancock-Fred Peckham, Town of Fremont-Jim Greier, Town of Delaware-Harold Roeder, Jr., Town of Cochection-Larry Richardson, Town of Tusten-Susan Sullivan, Town of Highland-Andrew Boyar, Town of Lumberland-Nadia Rajs, Town of Deerpark-David Dean, Damascus Township-Jeffrey Dexter, Berlin Township-Al Henry, Lackawaxen Township-Camille James, Shohola Township-Patricia Jeffer, Westfall Township-Michael Barth, National Park Service-Kris Heister. Staff in attendance: Executive Director-Laurie Ramie, Resource Specialist-Travis O'Dell, Secretary-Cindy Odell. Also in attendance: Ginny Dudko, Town of Deerpark alternate, and Tony Ritter, Town of Tusten alternate. Absent: State of New York, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Delaware River Basin Commission.

**Election of 2015 UDC Officers:** Boyar noted that the UDC Bylaws call for a written election as opposed to a voice vote. He thanked the Nominating Committee for the slate of officers presented. Boyar stated that he really enjoyed the last year as Chairperson of the UDC. He said it was an eye opener for him, noting the potential to use this pulpit to reach out on all sorts of issues. He said the Council has an important role to play and he feels more can be done. Boyar stated that it is important with the Council that everyone gets their say, but not at the same time. He asked that members be a little more mindful of being recognized by the Chairperson and speaking at that time and not over other people. Boyar thanked his colleagues, especially those that offered guidance and help, and offered the same to the next Chairperson. Boyar referenced the ballot included in members' packets. The Nominating Committee's slate of officers was presented. Candidates were: Chairperson – Alan Henry (Berlin Township); Vice-Chairperson – Susan Sullivan (Town of Tusten); and Secretary/Treasurer – Jeffrey Dexter (Damascus Township). Boyar asked if there were any other nominees. None were presented. Votes were cast and ballots were collected by Ramie for tallying. Boyar reported that with the exception of one write-in for Fred Peckham for Vice-Chairperson, the result was unanimous with thirteen votes cast for the slate of officers as recommended by the Nominating Committee. Henry thanked Boyar for his term as Chairperson. He conducted the remainder of the meeting.

**Approval of December 4 Meeting Minutes:** Henry asked for approval of the December 4<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. A motion by Rajs to accept those minutes was seconded by Boyar and carried.

**Public Comment on the Agenda:** None.

**Committee Reports:** Committee reports were provided based on the meeting minutes. They were: December 16 Water Use/Resource Management by Ritter; December 16 Operations by Boyar; and December 16 Project Review by Richardson.

Ritter provided a current hydrologic report. He noted the river is now frozen; it was open on December 16<sup>th</sup> as reported at the WU/RM meeting. He stated that Cannonsville is at 63%, Pepacton at 71%, and combined NYC storage 78.8%. Normal storage is 86%, Ritter added. He said that snowpack is about two inches.

### **Status Reports**

**Delaware River Basin Commission:** The DRBC was absent, however, the hydrologic report was provided. The NYC Delaware River Basin Storage as of December 29, 2014 was at a combined capacity of 66.6% with Cannonsville at 59.5%.

**NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation:** No report in the absence of Representative Bill Rudge.

**PA Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources:** No report in the absence of Representative Tim Dugan.

**National Park Service-Upper Delaware:** Heister reported that she followed up on the signs at either end of the Upper Delaware River Scenic and Recreational River corridor that offer people information via radio. She noted that Deerpark alternate Dudko had notified her that they were not working. Heister said those lines have been disconnected. The signs will be taken down. The Park Service is going to look at a more comprehensive strategy for signage.

Heister noted that Carla Hahn provided technical assistance to the UDC on records management and archiving. Hahn also posted the updated Design Handbook to the NPS webpage.

Heister said the Park Service has been working with Sullivan County on an agreement to display a large model of the Roebling Bridge at their D&H Canal Museum in Summitville.

Commercial Use Authorizations are coming up for renewal, Heister stated. An initial letter will be sent out to holders in February.

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy is open for business down at the Margold House, headquarters of The Eagle Institute, located on Scenic Drive in Lackawaxen. They opened the first weekend in December.

Heister encouraged members to visit the Upper Delaware's Facebook page. It can be accessed at [www.facebook.com/updeNPS](http://www.facebook.com/updeNPS), she noted.

**UDC Executive Director's Report:** Ramie reported that the day after the December 16 committee meetings, Governor Cuomo announced that he will prohibit high-volume hydraulic fracturing in New York State based on recommendations from the Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation. Final SGEIS findings will be released early this year, followed by a mandatory public comment period, then the ban will be formally enacted. The timing and magnitude of that decision was unexpected, Ramie noted. It does, however, bring a resolution to what has been a very divisive issue for our board pertaining to NY's moratorium on gas drilling. She said we will continue to monitor any Marcellus Shale activity in Wayne and Pike Counties in Pennsylvania, and the regulatory actions of the Delaware River Basin Commission.

Ramie said that on December 18<sup>th</sup>, the UDC was invited by PennDOT to Dunmore, PA for a briefing session specifically for our organization to get the latest information on the Pond Eddy Bridge replacement project. She referred to a copy of her notes included in members' packets. She said she would like to defer discussion to the next Water Use/Resource Management Committee meeting on January 20<sup>th</sup>.

Ramie reported that in terms of federal funding, our Cooperative Agreement was modified effective December 12 to reflect the end of the Continuing Resolution and passage of the federal budget. On December 23, the balance was deposited into our federal account which brings our allocation up to \$300,000 available to us in monthly applications. Initially, NPS had advised us to plan for a 1% decrease in our funding for FY 2015, which we did in the budget adopted on June 5, 2014. That funding has been restored which necessitates revising our budget, Ramie noted. This will be accomplished by resolution tonight under New Business, she added.

Ramie reported that the IRS increased the 2015 mileage reimbursement rate 1 ½ cents, to 57.5 cents per mile. This will result in a slight boost in members' travel expense checks, she noted.

Ramie said we received the final version of our FY 2014 Financial Review and tax filings from Eckersley and Ostrowski on December 26<sup>th</sup>. Once officers' signatures are obtained, the paperwork will be

submitted before the mid-February deadline. The 990 form includes an application for a small business health insurance refund of \$2,060, she added.

Ramie reported that recent grants were awarded to our member municipalities. The Town of Highland received \$1.736 million through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to replace its flood-prone bridge over Beaver Brook along NYS Route 97. The Town of Lumberland received a \$30,000 NYS Regional Economic Development Council grant for an engineering study to evaluate constructing a central sewer system in the Glen Spey area. Sullivan County Planning, through the same program, received \$35,150 for another phase of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program for the Upper Delaware River Corridor. That funding will be used to implement the design improvements at the Highland Access on NYS Route 97, and to work on operation and maintenance agreements for six Delaware River accesses located in Sullivan County.

Ramie stated that as a follow-up to the visit by the National Park Service's Archives Team last spring which produced a report in late summer of records management recommendations for UPDE and the UDC, our staff met with Carla Hahn on December 30<sup>th</sup> to discuss available resources to better identify, organize, and store the Council's records. This will be a long-term collective effort, she added. Ramie said we appreciate Hahn's help with this endeavor.

Ramie asked members to remind their towns and townships to return the 2015 representative and alternate appointment confirmation forms to Odell, even if there are no changes, to update our directories. Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statements for 2015 are in the packets to complete and return, she added. Once collected, they will be reviewed by our Executive Committee which consists of the chairs of our three standing committees to be chosen at their respective meetings on January 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

Ramie referred members to the January calendar of UDC Meetings, Deadlines and Activities included in their packets.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:**

**UDC Resolution 2015-01: Authorizing Signatories for the Council's Banking Accounts in 2015:** A resolution to allow the UDC 2015 officers and Executive Director to sign the corporate resolutions and signature cards for the accounts at Jeff Bank was presented. A motion by Rajsz seconded by Boyar to approve the resolution was carried unanimously.

**UDC Resolution 2015-02: Enter Into a Contract with Eckersley & Ostrowski, LLP for FY 2015 Financial Review:** A resolution to contract with the firm of Eckersley and Ostrowski, LLP of Scranton, PA to provide auditing and accounting services for Fiscal Year 2015 was presented. A motion by Dean seconded by Rajsz to approve the resolution was carried unanimously.

**UDC Resolution 2015-03: Resolution Amending the FY 2015 Budget:** A resolution to amend the FY 2015 budget earmarking the added funding to subsidize a 2015 River and Shoreline Clean-up Grants Program open to member municipalities was presented. A motion by Roeder seconded by Boyar to approve the resolution was carried unanimously.

**Draft Letter to PA DEP Northeast Regional Office: Mast Hope Development Wastewater Treatment Plant, Lackawaxen Township:** O'Dell referred members to the draft letter in their packets noting the letter was circulated in advance for review. He said he received two comments regarding the use of the word "perpetual" describing the problem with the discharge in the first sentence of the second paragraph. A motion to approve the letter was made by Richardson and seconded by Boyar. A brief discussion regarding the use of the word "perpetual" took place. A motion to amend the letter by deleting the word "perpetual" from the first sentence of the second paragraph was made by Richardson and seconded by Rajsz. Peckham suggested contacting the Delaware River Basin Commission to see if a docket for this plant exists. O'Dell said the DRBC will be copied on this letter and that he will follow up with a phone call to them. The motion to send the amended letter carried unanimously.

**Other:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion by Dean, seconded by Rajs, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. was carried unanimously.

*Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell 1/15/15*